## Claims

1. A method of determining the severity of Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease (COPD) in a patient which comprises measuring the concentration of soluble E-cadherin in a sample of the patient's urine and/or blood serum and determining the extent of severity by reference to a correlation graph which correlates Forced Expiratory Volume in the first second of expiration (FEV1) with soluble E-cadherin concentration.

2. A method according to claim 1 comprising measuring the concentration of soluble E-cadherin in a sample of the patient's blood serum.

3. A method according to claim 1 comprising measuring the concentration of soluble E-cadherin in a sample of the patient's urine.

4. A method according to claims 1 and 2 which comprises measuring the concentration of soluble E-cadherin in a sample of the patient's blood serum and urine.

5. A method of treating a patient suffering from COPD which comprises determing the extent of the disease by identifying the levels of soluble E-cadherin in a sample of the patient's blood serum and/or urine followed by administration of a compound which amellorates the symptoms of the disease.

6. A method according to claim 5 comprising identifying the concentration of soluble E-cadherin in a sample of the patient's blood serum.

7. A method according to claim 5 comprising identifying the concentration of soluble E-cadherin in a sample of the patient's urine.

8. A method according to claim 5 comprising identifying the levels of soluble E-cadherin in a sample of the patient's blood serum and urine.

9. A method of determing the responsiveness of a patient with COPD to therapy which comprises monitoring the concentration of soluble E-cadherin in a sample of the patient's blood serum and/or urine with time and determing the rate of change of extent of progression of the disease by reference to a correlation graph which correlates FEV1 with soluble E-cadherin concentration.

10. A method according to claim 9 comprising monitoring the concentration of soluble E-cadherin in a sample of the patient's urine.

11. A method according to claim 9 comprising monitoring the concentration of soluble E-cadherin in a sample of the patient's blood serum.

12. A method according to claim 9 comprising monitoring the concentration of soluble E-cadherin in samples of the patient's urine and blood serum with time.

13. A product for the prognosis of COPD severity in a patient which comprises means to report the concentration of soluble E-cadherin in a sample of blood serum and/or a sample of urine taken from the patient and a correlation graph which correlates FEV1 with solube E-cadherin concentration.

14. A product according to claim 13 wherein means to report the concentration of soluble E-cadherin comprises an anti-solube E-cadherin antibody.

15. A method according to any one of claims 1 to 12 wherein the correlation graph correlates FEV1 (as a percentage of the predicted value) with soluble E-cadherin concentration.